

KANSAS

Kansas State Historical Society
Cultural Resources Division

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

CERTIFICATION OF STATE REGISTER LISTING

The Register of Historic Kansas Places includes all Kansas properties nominated to the National Register as well as lower threshold properties which are listed on the state register only.

Property Name: Stein House

Address: 314 N. 7th Street, Seneca, KS 66538

Legal:

County: Nemaha

Owner: Ray & Roseann Huninghake

Address: 314 N. 7th Street. Seneca, KS 66538

National Register eligible ☐

State Register eligible ☒

This property was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review for the Register of Historic Kansas Places on August 21, 2004.

I hereby certify that this property is listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places.



Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

8/23/04

Date

9/95

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Description:

The Stein House (c. 1913) is located at 314 North Seventh Street in Seneca, KS. (pop. 2,000). The two-and-one-half story, gable front, frame house stands on a brick veneer, concrete foundation. The building maintains an eastern façade exposure, standing on the northeast corner of the intersection of North Seventh and Elk Streets. The building measures approximately forty-four feet from north to south and fifty-nine feet from east to west. A one-story den and two-car garage were added to the rear of the building in 1984. The original one-car garage (c. 1913) is extant and stands behind the house.

The gable-fronted structure is clad with narrow lap-siding. Corner boards finish the edges of each elevation. A wide entablature spans the space below the eaves. Fish-scale shingles cover the broad expanses of the east and west gables. Original paint treatment was a deep cream or yellow on the clapboards with white trim. The fish-scale shingles were painted a dark green, brown or red and the window frames were painted black or dark green.

A wide porch supported by four tapered wooden pillars spans the first level of the eastern façade. The classically inspired pillars rest on four brick posts capped with concrete. The pillars were painted white historically.

Fenestration in the house is primarily 1/1 double-hung sash. Fixed leaded glass window treatments fenestrate the façade's first level. Additionally, bay window projections on the first level of the southern elevation and the second level of the façade elevation contain examples of fixed leaded glass windows. The leaded glass window treatments illuminate the living room and foyer on the first level and the master bedroom on the second floor.

Three windows fenestrate the gable plane of the façade. While maintaining original proportion, these are replacement windows. An original pair of smaller gable windows fenestrates the western gable plane. A hipped roof dormer with double pane fenestration centrally pierces the north and south roof slopes. A brick chimney rises from the peak of the building's gable roof.

The gabled roof is elegantly finished with flared edges. Asphalt shingles cover the roof. An angled lip of shingles runs beneath the gable planes, accentuating the triangular motif of the form.

The 1913 garage stands to the southwest of the house. It is a gable roofed, frame structure built to accommodate one vehicle. Narrow lap siding covers its rectangular frame, corner posts

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terminate the elevation edges. Fish-scale shingles cover the gable ends of the structure. Fenestration occurs in the eastern gable and on the northwestern wall. The gable roof flares elegantly at the edges. Wooden shingles cover the roof. An angled lip of shingles runs beneath the gable, accentuating the triangular motif of the form.

The double bay garage addition and den utilize the narrow lap siding found on the original house. These additions project from the rear of the house.

The interior of the house displays a wide-open foyer and living room with Craftsman and Classically inspired woodwork. The kitchen and dining room stand beyond the front rooms, comprising a traditional early twentieth century four-room first floor plan. Circulation allows for an easy, almost circular, room-to-room access.

The imposing foyer staircase leads to a small center hall, with four bedrooms and a bath radiating off of the center core. In addition, the doorway to the attic leads from this center hallway. The attic is finished but maintains its broad open expanse.

The basement contains the furnace room, laundry room, and fruit and vegetable cellars. A laundry chute runs from the second floor hallway down to the first floor kitchen to the basement.

The house was wired for electricity and some of the original light fixtures and switches remain.

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Significance:

The Stein House (c. 1913) is being nominated to the National Register under criterion C for its architectural significance as an example of an early twentieth century, front gabled house. The building was constructed during a time of integrated building traditions and reflects muted elements of the Queen Anne style in its chaste yet substantial design. Constructed by Seneca builder Henry Bernard Woltkamp, the Stein house reflects both builder acuity and early twentieth century residential building trends. Classified by architectural historian Alan Gowans as a "comfortable house," the Stein House represents a class of residential architecture that incorporated open, free flowing floorplans with well lit, spacious rooms.

The house was commissioned by Peter P. Stein, a cashier with the First National Bank of Seneca. Stein was raised in Seneca and attended St. Benedict's College in Atchison. He worked as a clerk in a general store from 1897 to 1902, and then became bookkeeper of the National Bank of Seneca. He was promoted to cashier in 1907 and in 1912, left the National Bank of Seneca to become the cashier at the First National Bank of Seneca. He held this position for fifteen years and also served as Seneca City Treasurer. In 1927 Stein moved to Wichita where he had an interest in the Sunflower State Bank. When he died in 1934 he was the deputy register of deeds for Sedgwick County, Kansas.

Stein married Frances Woltkamp in 1902. Her brother, Henry Bernard Woltkamp, built the couple's home for them ten years after their marriage. Woltkamp (1847- 1934) was a prolific builder and contractor in the Seneca area. Twenty-two residences in Seneca have been attributed to him. Woltkamp was born in Dyersville, Iowa and learned carpentry from his German father. He moved to a farm near Seneca when he was fifteen, learning the upholstery trade and then later branching out into carpentry and contracting. He was known as the man who climbed the Sts. Peter and Paul church steeple and repaired the cross when it was damaged by a tornado in 1896.

The wide, gable façade of the Stein House speaks volumes about late 19th and early 20th century residential architecture. While not an example of Queen Anne architecture, the house displays recognizable features of the style, albeit somewhat streamlined and flattened. The bay window is wide and flat, achieving angularity in its three-sided form rather than the traditional curvature associated with the earlier Queen Anne style. The fish-scale shingling that adorns the upper gable recalls the exuberance of the earlier curvilinear style but lies quietly flush against the flat wall plane. Woltkamp's vision of what a substantial, nine-room house should be did take some cues from his earlier work with the Queen Anne style but clearly represents a cleaner, more open and in some respects simpler approach to residential design.

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The exterior of the house is clearly delineated into three visual bands. Fenestration patterns, the wide and generous porch and the strong gable presence associate both horizontality and triangularity with the house design. When combined with the central core access floorplan of the first and second floors, the home stands clearly in the "comfortable house" tradition of early twentieth century residential architecture.

The comfortable house refers to the profusion of styles and types built in suburban settings from 1890- 1930. They were considered "modern" homes, built first and foremost for comfort and convenience. Indoor plumbing, built-in gas, electricity, and central heating were all luxuries a few decades earlier, but were becoming common in the early twentieth century. Laundry facilities began to appear in basements, instead of back yards or rear porches. Coal fired heating systems almost entirely superseded the wood or coal-burning stoves in the post-Victorian period, even though they had been introduced in 1818. By the 1920s alternative heating systems utilizing steam, hot air, and hot water were available. (Gowans, 1987)

The popularity of the comfortable house forms like the front gable type reflected desires among the middle class to be modern and progressive. Concerns that domestic buildings should be designed to be more responsive to new lifestyles and spatial relationships were also satisfied by the new house forms. New ideas and philosophies regarding residential architectural forms reached wide audiences via the popular press. The widespread availability of pattern books and mail-order house plans during the late 19th and the advent of mass circulated magazines such as The Ladies Home Journal and Better Homes and Gardens in the early 20th century helped disseminate these ideas.

The way comfortable homes were constructed, and the development of an organized home-building industry reshaped American thoughts and ideas regarding residential construction. The widespread popularity of the gable front house is significant as an important growing trend in architectural history that coincided with the growing significance of the middle class. Its popularity stemmed from an adaptability to different climates, settings and materials. Intimate, cozy interior spaces and unpretentious well-crafted exterior massing and detailing also contributed to the type's success.

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Bibliography

Courier Democrat. June 20, 1913.

Gowans, Alan. The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture 1890-1930. (Cambridge: MIT, 1986).

Massey, James and Shirly Maxwell. House Styles in America: The Old-House Journal Guide to the Architecture of American Homes. (New York: Penguin, 1996).

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. (New York: Knopf, 1991).

Rial, DarlAnn Swayze. Stein House nomination draft, 2003.

Seneca Courier Tribune. August 2, 1934; August 13, 1934.

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property stands on Lots 8, 9 and E 4 feet of Lot 10, Block 37 in Seneca, Nemaha County, KS. The building maintains an eastern façade exposure, standing on the northeast corner of the intersection of North Seventh and Elk Streets. Bound to the east by North Seventh Street and the north by Elk Street, adjacent property lines bound the southern and western property lines.

Boundary Justification

The property includes all land historically associated with the nominated buildings.